

Old Montgomery County Court House
Northwest corner of Third and Main Streets
Dayton
Montgomery County
Ohio

HABS No. 0-51

HABS
OHIO
57-DAYT
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

OLD MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURT HOUSE

OHIO
57-DAYT.

Location: Northwest corner of Third and Main Streets, Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio.

Present Owner: Montgomery County, Northwest corner of Third and Main Streets, Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio.

Brief Statement of Significance: This Greek Revival building, erected 1847-1850, is of architectural interest because of its handsome interior and exterior features. The Court House lawn was the scene of an address by Abraham Lincoln in 1859.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Montgomery County.
2. Date of erection: 1847-1850.
3. Architect: Howard Daniels of Cincinnati.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: Reported by The Ohio Guide to be in the British Museum. The British Museum said they did not have the plans in correspondence in 1953.
5. Important old views and references:

Views: View in Dayton, drawn by Henry Howe in 1846, page 280, Vol. 2, Historical Collections of Ohio by Henry Howe. This drawing is inaccurate but includes the statement "On the left is shown the Montgomery County Court-House, the most costly and elegant in Ohio:-" Date of drawing precedes the building of the courthouse. Two photos (1937) HABS Catalog. The Ohio Architect, November 1953 issue, page 6. A History of Ohio by Roseboom and Weisenburger, page 276.

References: Dayton Ohio, An Intimate History, by Charlotte Reeve Conover.

Early Homes in Ohio, by I. N. Frary.
The Buckeye Country, by Harlan Hatcher.
Old Northwest Architecture (Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory), by Rexford Newcomb.
Greek Revival Architecture in America by Talbot Hamlin.
The Second Latin Book.

All these references referred to by John Sullivan, Jr. in Article on Page 6, The Ohio Architect, July 1951; also on page 15, The Ohio Architect, October 1954.

The Ohio Guide, also has references.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: "Abraham Lincoln spoke against Stephen A. Douglas from the Courthouse lawn, September 19, 1859"—see page 273, The Ohio Guide.
- C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None known.

Prepared by Prof. Perry E. Borchers
February 1959

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

- 1. Architectural Character: The Greek Temple exterior, domed stair hall, and domed courtroom make this building of national architectural interest. See Greek Revival Architecture in America by Talbot Hamlin.
- 2. Condition of Fabric: Good. Some signs of leaking from roof onto dome of elliptical courtroom.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

- 1. Overall dimensions: Two stories with basement.
- 2. Foundations: Stone - 9 ft. in thickness.
- 3. Wall construction: Dayton Stone—see page 274, Vol. 2, Historical Collections of Ohio, by Henry Howe. Stone six feet thick in basement—brick arches in basement and brick vaults in basement ceiling.
- 4. Chimneys: Not in use.
- 5. Openings
 - a. Doorways and doors: Vestibule added. Interior doors solid iron.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Interior solid iron shutters.

6. Roof

- a. Shape, covering: Structural members--more than thirty brick arches and walls in attic supporting stone slabs of roof. Wood and built-up roofing over. Pitched roof.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Stone.
- c. Dormers: None; but two roof lights for circular stairhall and elliptical-domed courtroom project at ridge of roof.

C. Technical Description of Interiors

- 1. Floor Plans: See measured drawings prepared for the Historical American Buildings Survey.
- 2. Stairways: Central circular stairway of cantilevered stone treads. Two minor stairways (now closed off) of tightly-winding treads supported on a central pier.
- 3. Flooring: Stone.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster and paint over stone.
- 5. Doorways and doors: Wood.
- 6. Trim: Stone.
- 7. Hardware: Iron.
- 8. Lighting: Nondescript modern lighting.
- 9. Heating: Now has central heating from adjacent building.

D. Site

- 1. General setting and orientation: Set at very center of Dayton, on Northwest corner Third and Main Streets, with entrance portico facing east.
- 2. Outbuildings: Old Jail behind it. "New Courthouse" ca. 1880 beside it.
- 3. Landscaping, gardens etc.: Small green grass plot to south.

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Addendum to:

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Addendum to
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Third & Main Sts.
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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OLD MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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Data pages 1 through 3 were previously transmitted to the Library of Congress. This is data page 4.

INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAMMETRIC IMAGES

The glass photogrammetric plates listed below are not reproducible except with special permission. However, reference prints and film copy negatives have been made from the plates indicated by an asterisk (*) and are included in the Library of Congress collection of formal HABS/HAER photographs.

- 4 4" x 6" glass plate diapositives (2 stereopairs) and
- 12 4" x 6" glass plate negatives (6 stereopairs) produced by
Perry E. Borchers of the Ohio State University in 1958.

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-501L

EAST FACADE
(Negative)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-501R *

EAST FACADE
(Negative)

Left and right overlap: 85%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-502L

EAST AND SOUTH FACADES FROM SE
(Negative)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-502R *

EAST AND SOUTH FACADES FROM SE
(Negative)

Left and right overlap: 90%

OLD MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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Data (Page 5)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-503L

EAST PORTION OF SOUTH FACADE
(Negative)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-503R *

EAST PORTION OF SOUTH FACADE
(Negative)

Left and right overlap: 90%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-504L *

WEST PORTION OF SOUTH FACADE
(Negative)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-504R

WEST PORTION OF SOUTH FACADE
(Negative)

Left and right overlap: 90%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-505L *

SOUTH AND WEST FACADES FROM SW
(Negative)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-505R

SOUTH AND WEST FACADES FROM SW
(Negative)

Left and right overlap: 95%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-506L *

WEST AND SOUTH FACADES FROM SW
(Negative)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-506R

WEST AND SOUTH FACADES FROM SW
(Negative)

Left and right overlap: 95%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-507L

ORIGINAL WHALE OIL LAMPS, EAST FACADE
(Diapositive enlargement)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-507R *

ORIGINAL WHALE OIL LAMPS, EAST FACADE
(Diapositive enlargement)

Left and right overlap: 95%

OLD MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-508L CEILING OF PORTICO, EAST FACADE
(Diapositive enlargement)

LC-HABS-GS07-T-810-508R * CEILING OF PORTICO, EAST FACADE
(Diapositive enlargement)

Left and right overlap: 95%

- 13 4" x 6" glass plate negatives (5 stereopairs and one triplet) produced by Perry E. Borchers of the Ohio State University in 1959.

One survey control contact print per plate; survey control information for each pair/triplet.

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-200L DOME OF CIRCULAR STAIR-WELL--VERTICAL

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-200M * DOME OF CIRCULAR STAIR-WELL--VERTICAL

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-200R DOME OF CIRCULAR STAIR-WELL--VERTICAL

Left and middle overlap: 90%
Middle and right overlap: 85%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-201L * DOME OF COURT ROOM--VERTICAL

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-201R DOME OF COURT ROOM--VERTICAL

Left and right overlap: 85%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-202L * DOME OF COURT ROOM--VERTICAL

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-202R DOME OF COURT ROOM--VERTICAL

Left and right overlap: 90%

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-203T DOME OF COURT ROOM TAKEN FROM SOUTH
SIDE OF ROOM--VERTICAL BASE

LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-203B * DOME OF COURT ROOM TAKEN FROM SOUTH
SIDE OF ROOM--VERTICAL BASE

Left and right overlap: 95%

OLD MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-204T	INTERIOR OF COURTROOM, LOOKING EAST, FROM BALCONY
LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-204B *	INTERIOR OF COURTROOM, LOOKING EAST, FROM BALCONY
	Left and right overlap: 95%
LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-205L	ATTIC LOOKING EAST
LC-HABS-GS07-T-1116-205R *	ATTIC LOOKING EAST
	Left and right overlap: 85%

PROJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Photogrammetric images were incorporated into the HABS/HAER collections in the summers of 1985 and 1986. Inventories of the images were compiled and filed as data pages for each structure recorded. Since the glass photogrammetric plates are not reproducible except with special permission, a reference print and film copy negative were made from one plate of each stereopair and from the most informative plates in sequential sets. The reference prints and copy negatives were then incorporated into the formal HABS/HAER photograph collections.

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